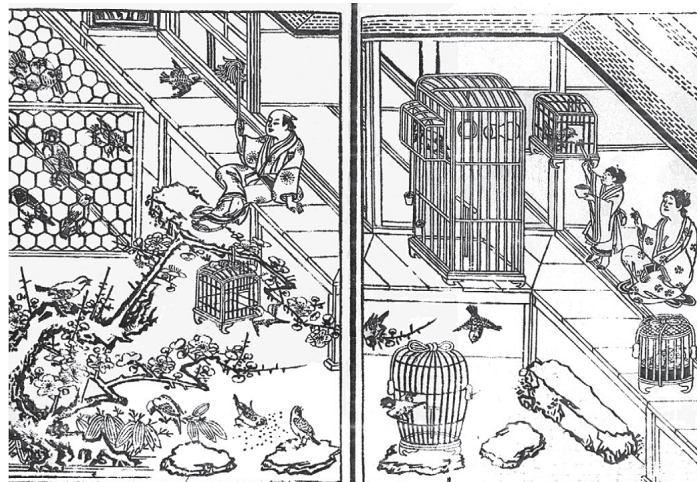


Pet Keeping, Commerce and Popular Culture: situating pet manuals in Tokugawa Japan

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1. Birds and Cages in an Urban Garden (Source: *Yobukodori*, 1710).

In *Yobukodori* ('Calling Birds' 喚小鳥 1710), one of the earliest bird-keeping manuals published in Tokugawa Japan, there is a scene of an urban garden, presumably portraying a well-to-do merchant family enjoying their garden in the summer. It shows various birds, some in cages and others roaming freely, a small child feeding Japanese bush warbler nestlings and the owner using a stick adorned with streamers to attract a bird's attention. Although this idyllic scene is likely imaginary, the cages and birds depicted were commonly found in the Tokugawa period. The large aviary was meant for pheasants and other large birds, while the smaller cages were typically used for smaller birds, such as Japanese bush warblers (鶯 *uguisu*) skylarks (雲雀 *hibari*), varied tits (山雀 *yamagara*), and Japanese quails (鶉 *uzura*).

The foregoing illustration is one of many included in the *Yobukodori*, a catalogue of more than 120 Japanese birds. The catalogue contains information about where and when birds can be found, how they can be identified, what to feed them and how to develop their singing ability. It appears that birds were prized primarily for their song and appearance. However, as Koyama points out, some owners also enjoyed teaching their birds, particularly the varied tit (*yamagara*), tricks (Koyama p. 214).

Although information on pet keeping in early modern Japan is limited, published pet manuals

offer insights into which animals were popular, which traits were valued, and how animals were bred, reared, trained, and appreciated. Utilizing popular publications, prints and pamphlets, this essay examines the various ways in which animals were kept and valued as companion animals, and how the practice and popularity of pet keeping was impacted by broader developments in early modern society, such as the spread of popular printing and commodification of knowledge.

The oldest extant pet manual, a quail-keeping guide entitled *Uzura no sho* ('Book on Quails' 鶉書), was published in 1649. The main chapters contain information about breeding and keeping quail, understanding their song, and caring for them when sick. This publication suggests that quails were one of the first type of birds kept as pets during the early modern period. The domestication of quails probably originated in the Muromachi period. During the Edo period, quail breeding became a popular pastime. The owner of the Soseidō (蕪生堂主人) is listed as the guide's author. Unfortunately, little is known about him. The earliest Japanese records on keeping small birds as pets were transmitted as manuscripts in the Kamakura period. Pre-Tokugawa sources suggest that keeping birds was, at the time, still an elite pursuit. A scene from a typical early-sixteenth-century screen *Rakuchū rakugai zu* ('Scenes in and around the Capital') by the famous painter Kanō Motonobu depicts a gathering in front of a warrior or courtier residence in Kyoto. Two men hold birdcages and appear to be engaging in a song competition. (Koyama p. 216).



2. A bush warbler song competition. Detail from 'Scenes in and around the Capital' by Kanō Motonobu (c. 1525; National Museum of Japanese History)

A testament to aviculture's growing popularity, commoners began, during the eighteenth century, to compose more manuals for rearing and keeping birds. This was supported by two socio-economic developments: the establishment of pet shops and emergence of commercial printing as a popular and profitable industry. The latter was particularly important because it enabled the mass production of bird-keeping manuals and dissemination of information about aviculture. Two such manuals, *Mangei maniai bukuro* (万芸間似合袋 1764) and *Momochidori* (百千鳥 1799), which contain the names and addresses of specific merchant houses, were likely written and commissioned by bird sellers. The owners of pet shops other individuals with specialized knowledge about animals and a commercial interest in the pet industry appear to have played a key role the production of these

documents.

During the same period, knowledge about aviculture and the needs of specific birds increased. In *Momochidori*, for example, the instructions for keeping, breeding and feeding various birds are much more detailed than those contained in earlier texts. They actually determine the structure of the book, which features chapters on pulverizing rice into powder, preparing *aomi* (青味) as feed, providing pet birds with water, and constructing bird cages for spring and autumn.

Apparently, the crucial issue in the case of domesticated wild birds was ensuring they were properly fed and provided with water. It was notoriously difficult to provide birds with sustenance and keep them alive, especially if they were caught in the wild, either by the owner or a pet supplier. The information contained in the guide indicates that people either captured pets on their own or purchased them from a pet shop. Other sections of the guide discuss the importance of bathing and proper bathing methods. The guide describes the various problems commonly faced by pet owners, including leg swelling and other illnesses, what to do when birds refused to eat, and how to deal with red mite (*wakumomushi* 細植虫). In addition, it contains information about the disposal of excrement and other hygiene-related issues, and instructions about proper cage construction and other avicultural issues.



3. A Scene from Doctor's Garden in a 19th-Century Novel by Takizawa Bakin.

Bird-keeping scenes also appear in popular literature. Takizawa Bakin (曲亭 馬琴, 1767-1848), a famous novelist renowned for his love of aviculture, instructed his illustrator Utagawa Toyohiro (歌川 豊広, 1773-1828) to produce an illustration of a doctor's garden for his novel *Katakiuchi tsuzumigataki* 敵討鼓瀑布 (1807).

The illustration depicts birds and exotic plants, such as *zabuton* (cacti), renowned for their medicinal qualities. Tools, such as a mortar and pestle, which were used to *grind* bird seeds also appear in the image, indicating that they were essential for bird keeping. This illustration also suggests that, at least for physicians, garden keeping and knowledge about foreign and domestic plants was part of a broader body of knowledge that extended to animals and other parts of the natural world. In particular, many physicians possessed not only knowledge of *honzōgaku* (本草学), or the study of medicinal plants and herbs, but also broader knowledge about flora and fauna. Bakin

originally trained as a physician and maintained a life-long interest in the natural world. A renowned aviculturist, at some point, he was entrusted with a collection of exotic birds owned by high-ranking official. This act of bestowal suggests the existence of a community of aviculturists who shared knowledge about birds and bird-keeping (Suzuki 2010 (in Japanese)). Aviculture and horticulture were part of a broader ‘hobby’ culture related to the history, production and maintenance of natural and manufactured goods. The culture encompassed not only Japanese objects, plants, and animals, but also new imports obtained from Chinese, Dutch and Korean connections. Exotic animals introduced into Japan in the early modern period were rare and expensive to maintain, requiring specialized knowledge obtained through Chinese and Dutch books and contacts. As a result, most were kept by high-ranking samurai and wealthy merchants. In some instances, new exotic animals also reached the common public.

In the mid-eighteenth century, two new animals, the *nezumi* (pet rats) and goldfish, made their way to Japan and enjoyed widespread popularity as pets. The popularity of both animals was supported by new, widely-circulated pet manuals. Here again, breeding and keeping guides, which provided specialized knowledge about breeds, feeding and procreation, appeared to have played a key role in popularizing the keeping of both animals.

Published in 1784, a guide entitled ‘How to Keep Goldfish’, *Kingyo sodate gusa* 金魚養玩草, informs readers about a new fish from China that was meant to be kept as a pet and bred at home. Important points discussed in the manual include the categories of goldfish, methods for distinguishing sex, breeding, feeding, curing illnesses, changing water, and maintaining proper water temperature. ‘How to Keep Goldfish’ was reprinted several times during the Tokugawa period.



4. Illustrations from *Kingyo sodate gusa* 金魚養玩草 “How to Keep Goldfish” (1748).

Goldfish were commonly categorized using three indexes: tail type, dorsal fin type, and body size. The fact that depiction of goldfish appear in a wide array of prints and books illustrations is

a testament to their popularity. Goldfish were also sold at markets and summer festivals, usually alongside plants and carp. Festivals commonly featured attractions enabling individuals to capture their own goldfish and carp.



5. 18th-Century *Ukiyo-e* Prints by Suzuki Harunobu (鈴木春信 1724-1770) and Kitagawa Utamaro (喜多川歌麿 1753-1806).

In addition to more traditional large basins and fish bowls, owners sometimes kept their fish in newer-style small glass fishbowls called “goldfish balls,” which were displayed in the windows of back-alley tenements or even carried around.

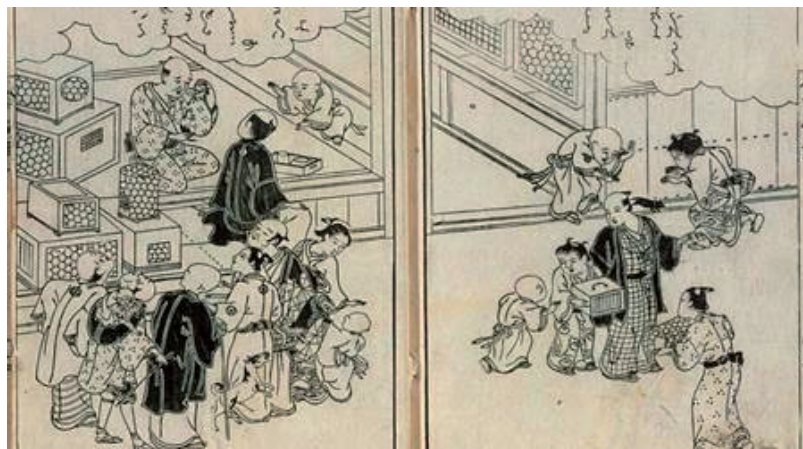
During this period, the *nezumi*, a term that refers either to rats or mice, also became popular pets. Again, several manuals were published on how to keep and breed them, and they appear in prints by famous printmakers.



6. Pet *Nezumi* Portrayed in Prints by Suzuki Harunobu and Chōkōsai Eishō (鳥高齋栄昌, Late-18th Century)

Raising *nezumi* became so popular that two guidebooks were published to assist the owner of

this new pet. The first, *Yōso tama no kakehashi* (養鼠玉のかけはし ‘A Bridge to Obtain Precious *Nezumi*’), appeared in 1775 and the second, *Chingan sodategusa* (珍翫鼠育廿 ‘How to Keep and Breed Special *Nezumi*’) was published in 1787.¹ The latter was authored by Zeniya Chōbei (銭屋長兵), while the former *Yōso tama no kakehashi* was written by someone who identifies himself as ‘Shunpandō.’ The names of both individuals suggests that they were shop owners who also engaged in *nezumi* breeding. The former manual provides details about novel varieties of *nezumi*, where they could be procured, how to raise, rear, and care for them, and the sort of cages they required. In addition, the book instructs that cages should be kept clean and contain a covered refuge inside for hiding and sleeping, drainable floor, drawer underneath to enable proper excrement disposal. Lastly, it states that food should be provided in a small container or split bamboo receptacle.



7. A *Nezumi* and Cage Seller in *Yōso tama no kakehashi* (1775)

The second manual, *Chingan sodategusa*, deals more extensively with the different types of *nezumi*, what to feed them, how to raise them, how to treat illnesses, and the like. In the case of a sick *nezumi*, for example, it suggests they should be fed broiled crayfish and fanned with heated camphor.

The book also contains information about breeding techniques and creating new varieties. An important distinguishing feature in this respect is the colour and pattern of the fur. The book distinguishes, for example, between the ‘bear rat’ with a black coat and one spot of pigmentation, the ‘deer-spotted rat’, and the yellowish brown, white-bellied ‘fox rat’.

Regarding breeding, it notes that the male and female should be separated after mating and pups will remain hairless and closed eyes for seventeen days after which their eyes will open and coat will appear. After that point, the guide mentions, they can consume food other than the mother’s milk. In cases in which the mother is absent, it notes that the rat pups must be provided with warmth and candy dissolved in water or milk. Furthermore, it states that they may only be provided with other foods after their eyes have opened.

¹ It remains unclear in these texts whether the term *nezumi* was used to refer to the rat (*Rattus norvegicus*) or the mouse (*Mus musculus*). However, on the basis of their fur colour variations, which are still prevalent in contemporary rats, biologist Kuramoto concludes they should be classified as rats rather than mice (Kuramoto 2011). To avoid confusion, I use the Japanese term *nezumi*.



8. Various Types of *Nezumi* Images in *Chingan sodategusa*. Poems are included with the illustrations. The text with guidebook information appears on the side.

Chingan sodategusa is also important in that displays a feature commonly found in Tokugawa-era books, which can be described as ‘multi-modality.’ As guide books, they include important information about animal science. At the same time, however, they contain poetry, perhaps sponsored by a poetry club, as well as commercial information about where to obtain *nezumi* and cages.

As the foregoing analysis demonstrates, there were many aspects to pet-keeping apart from the emotional and attachment aspect. It was obviously an arena of competition, as well as a hobby to be shared with others and a social activity. In addition, it could also be a source of pride and, if one could successfully breed and rear pets, a source of money and status.

To conclude, it is worth noting that these early modern developments in relations between humans and non-human animals are not unique to Japan. Rather, they are found in many early modern societies. As Glynis Ridley has suggested in her introduction to a special issue of the *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* that deals with human-animal relations, “The eighteenth century was a time not only of rapid expansion of the natural world but also of rapidly changing relationships between human and non-human animals” (Ridley 2010: 432). The discovery of new species, many of them exotic, combined with an increase in the modes of human-animal interaction, such as pet-keeping, and new forms of human domination of other animals, such as breeding programmes, substantially changed human-animal relations and subjected a wider array of animals to human control. In Europe, this was mostly related to cattle. In Japan, cattle did not play an important role. However, the idea of breeding as a way to form non-human animals to the tastes, preferences and needs of humans can be seen here as well in the manipulation and design of pet animals. It was strongly embedded in an urban culture where pet breeding and supply became a business like any other. As in the case of many other commodities, animals obtained commercial value and were subject to trade and value.

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ペット飼育、商業、大衆文化：

徳川日本におけるペットマニュアルの位置づけ

マルガリータ・ウィンケル

キーワード：ペット飼育、徳川時代、近世大衆本、浮世絵、アニマル・スタディーズ

江戸時代のペットマニュアルは、どのような動物が人気で、どのような特性が重要であるかについてヒントを与えてくれる。それらの動物はどのように育ち、飼育されていたのだろうか。最も古いペットのマニュアルは、『鶉書』（1649—ウズラノショ）という本であり、それによると、鶉が徳川日本で飼われていた最古のペットのひとつであることがわかる。徳川時代のペットマニュアルのほとんどは鳥に関するものであり、鳥はその歌唱力のために飼われていた。人気の鳥はウグイス（鶯）、ヒバリ（雲雀）、ヤマガラ（山雀）であった。最も重要な本は、『呼子鳥』（1710—ヨブコドリ）、『万芸間似合袋』（1764—マンゲイマニアイブクロ）、『百千鳥』（1799—モモチドリ）である。これらの本は、鳥かご、餌、病気および鳥の飼育に関する他の多くの側面の指示を含む。

人気の鳥はほとんどすべて日本原産の鳥である。しかしながら中国から新しく導入された2匹のペットの飼育も盛んになった。1つ目は金魚、2つ目は鼠であり、どちらもペットブームを引き起こした。『金魚養玩草』（1748—キンギョソダテグサ）は、金魚の飼育方法を説明している。『養鼠玉のかけはし』（1775—ヨウソタマノカケハシ）は、ネズミをペットとして飼う方法を伝えている。続いて『珍翫鼠育廿』（1787—チンガンソダテグサ）という別のネズミペットブックが続く。ペットショップの所有者によって書かれ、出版されたペット本もある。ペットショップやペットショーも流行するようになった。